



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR

DOUGLAS S. KRESS  
DIRECTOR



April 22, 2020

Dear Community Partner,

Today an order was issued that requires your building management to write a COVID-19 safety plan that can be put into place if a number of residents of your building test positive for COVID-19. This plan will help protect you, other residents of the building, and staff.

The plan must be based on CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines and will include things like barring visitors except for essential medical care, ending group activities in the building, arranging for deliveries to be made at the front door, and intensified cleaning of public spaces.

I understand that if these plans need to be enacted they will cause some disruption and inconvenience. I'd encourage you to plan with the service providers who serve the building ahead of time. This will allow you to stay in touch if this plan needs to be activated. Because older residents and those with preexisting health conditions are at greater risk for severe COVID-19 symptoms, limiting the spread of the virus in senior housing buildings will help to save lives.

You can also take precautions now to protect yourself and your residents including limiting time in public spaces, wearing a face covering when leaving home, and not allowing residents to congregate in common areas or in units.

We also strongly encourage you to sign up for City Alerts by any means you are able to receive (phone calls, text messages, emails). You can sign up at [www.somervillema.gov/alerts](http://www.somervillema.gov/alerts). More information about COVID-19 and local resources is posted daily at [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus).

Thank you for your cooperation and please be healthy and safe.

Douglas S Kress  
Director, Health and Human Services



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Board of Health ORDER  
April 22, 2020

COVID-19 is a contagious virus dangerous to the public health, particularly to those over the age of 60 and/or with pre-existing health issues. COVID-19 is transmitted by close personal contact with infected persons and may have severe complications.

People who are infected with the COVID-19 virus may spread the disease even before they show any symptoms of illness. By not remaining at least six feet apart from others, you put yourself and others at risk of the disease.

As a housing for elderly Residential Facility, you are hereby ORDERED , within 48 hours of receipt of this Order, to share a written COVID-19 Plan with the City of Somerville Board of Health to meet the criteria of the Order, as set forth below.

The plan must comply with applicable guidance from the CDC (available online at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) quarantine guidance and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's guidance regarding the screening of residents, staff, and visitors for signs of COVID-19 or other illness, and shall be subject to review and approval of the Somerville Board of Health or its designee. The COVID-19 Plan must also address other applicable COVID-19-related guidance, including steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission by authorized visitors (such as through hand washing, masking and maintaining at least six feet distance from other people). Nothing in this Order prohibits a Residential Facility from taking steps more protective against transmission of COVID-19 than guidance provided by the CDC or DPH in its plan. Each Residential Facility must update its COVID-19 Plan when new COVID-19 recommendations or requirements are issued by the CDC or DPH or as otherwise required by law.

At a minimum each plan must:

- Restrict visitors to Essential medical providers or end of life care;
- Cancel all group events and activities;
- Close community and activity rooms;
- When possible, restrict to only one entrance (main entrance);
- Remove chairs from common areas and other areas that encourage congregating activities;
- Provide for frequent, adequate sanitization of high touch areas and common areas, including but not limited to each door knob, handrail, flat surfaces, common areas and laundry rooms;
- Provide 24 hr staffing or monitoring of front door;
- No interior/unit door delivery;
- All deliveries, including food delivery, be delivered as far at the building front door;
- Post appropriate signage at entrance that includes information about visitor restrictions, deliveries and management contact information;
- Develop a written plan, in partnership with providers (i.e. CoA, SCES, PACE, Meals on Wheels), for continuity of services for residents, including but not limited to existing meal/grocery services, care services and medical treatments;

- Require COVID 19 health screening for essential staff;
- Ensure appropriate requirements for PPE to be worn by residents in common areas and essential staff

Each Residential Facility's COVID-19 Plan must also include a requirement that any employee or other staff member who is sick or does not pass the required screening must be immediately sent home and not return to work until feeling better or authorized to return by a physician. If a Residential Facility is unable to immediately send home any such employee or staff member, then the Residential Facility must (1) prevent that staff member from engaging in any resident care or contact (except in an emergency when the Residential Facility is doing whatever it can to protect residents) and (2) immediately notify its respective licensing entity and seek guidance from that entity.

If you require assistance or help in complying with this Order, please contact Doug Kress at 617-625-6600 x 4310 or [dkress@somervillema.gov](mailto:dkress@somervillema.gov).

Date: 4/22/20



Director of Health & Human Services

To appeal this order, you may telephone Doug Kress, Director of Health & Human Services, or his designee at 617-625-6600 x 3410.